trance and access to the other. As we know by experience that in summer, when cherries are good to eat, and when you mean to take one of them on a dish, and mean to take only one, you pluck six or seven, nine or ten more with the first one. Horace, too, in his *Ars Poetica*, remarks on this subject, that is to say, that the tenth number is most perfect: *Decies repetita placebunt.** 'Things,' he says, 'ten times repeated will give pleasure,' and withal will be more perfect. I have, therefore, with good reason divided the superficial height and breadth of our letters into ten units, and the chain of gold into ten links, corresponding to our model letter I. There are some who, as laymen speak of arms, say that they should be divided into six only, others into eight, and others into nine. But what they mean by six, or eight, or nine I know not, whether portions, or units, or lines. But methinks that they talk more because they think to show thereby that they know something of the matter, than from true knowledge or experience; therefore I leave them to their opinion, ill-founded as it is in reason.

* *Verse* 365.

FEW persons would have thought that our aforesaid King of Greek Poets, Homer, covertly & under the mask of fable, signified the divine inspiration of Letters & Sciences, & their intimate connection; but on searching closely thereinto, it is clear that he so did, whether or no it appears at first sight; and, to give to devoted lovers of well-formed letters the wherewithal to meditate and reflect, I will quote him here, to the end that you may see and fully understand.

Γνωσετ' επειτ' οσον ειμι θεων καρτιστος απαντ'
Ειδ' αγε πειρησασθε θεοι ινα ειδετε παντες,
Σειρην χρυσειην εξ ουρανοθεν κρεμαντες,
Παντες δ' εξαπτεσθε θεοι, πασαι τεθεαιναι.
Αλλ' ουκ αν ερυσαιτ' εξ ουρανοθεν πεδιονδε
ʒην' υπατον μητωρ' ουδ' ει μαλα πολλα κακοιτε
Αλλ' οτε δη και εγων προφρων εθελοιμι ερυσσαι,
Αυτη κεν γαιη ερυσαι μ'αυτη τε θαλασση.
Σειρην μεν κεν επειτα περι ριων ουλυποιο
Δησαι μην ταδεκ' αυτε μετηορα παντα γενοιτο.
Τοσσον εγω περιτ' ειμι θεων, περιτ' ʃμ' ανθρωπων. [37]

That is to say, in Latin, as Laurence Valla translates it for us: *Agedum auream restim e cœlo suspendite, eaque cuncti Dii ac Deæ apprehensa me*

hinc detrahite in terram. Nullo id quantolibet nixu poteritis efficere. At cum mihi facere idem irato libuerit, in terras vos vniuersos, et in maria vsque detraherem, quin etiam circumligata reste hac ad summitatem Olympi omnia superne alleuarem vt intelligatis quantum ego Deos simulatque homines antecello. That is, Jupiter is represented as saying:—'If you would make trial of my powers and strength and would have some knowledge of me, hasten, and hang from Heaven a chain of gold; and if you all, both Gods and Goddesses, can do it, draw me from hence to earth: I know that, with all your strength, you will not be able to do it. But when I am wroth, if it be my pleasure, I will drag you all hither and thither, by land and sea, & destroy you utterly. And, far more, with this chain of gold I could draw the whole of earth & sea to the topmost summit of Olympus. And by this, know how far I excel and surpass in might both Gods and men.'

JUstly, then, will this chain of gold, which we have imposed upon our I, signify to us, by allegory, that the knowledge & inspiration of letters comes to us from Heaven and from God; that these letters are so closely akin and so nearly connected that they all have a share in each other; likewise the Sciences, and consequently the Virtues.

VIrgil, a great imitator of Homer, instead of this chain of gold, imagined a Golden Bough for his Æneas, which means, in allegory, that every learned and virtuous man carries in his hand—that is to say, for his use—a Bough of Wisdom, which is of gold as being the most precious of all metals. The Sibyl, that is to say, divine inspiration, says to Æneas, that is to say, to the devoted lover & observer of virtue, which consists chiefly in letters and goodly learning, the words that follow; and they are written in Book VI of the said Virgil's *Æneid*:—

Accipe quæ peragenda prius, latet arbore opaca
Aureus et folijs et lento vimine ramus,
Iunoni infernæ dictus sacer, hunc tegit omnis
Lucus, et obscuris claudunt conuallibus vmbræ,
Sed non ante datur telluris operta subire,
Auricomos quam quis decerpserit arbore fœtus.
Hoc sibi pulchra suum ferri Proserpina munus
Instituit, primo auulso non deficit alter

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